DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 474 339 JC 030 172

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TITLE	The Learning Paradigm College.
ISBN	ISBN-1-882982-58-4
PUB DATE	2003-00-00
NOTE	379p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Anker Publishing Company, Inc., 176 Ballville Road, P.O. Box 249, Bolton, MA 01740-0249 ($39.95). Web site: http://www.ankerpub.com.
PUB TYPE	Books (010) -- Opinion Papers (120)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available From EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Change Strategies; Community Colleges; *Educational Change; *Educational Development; *Educational Innovation; Improvement Programs; *Learning Strategies; *Outcomes of Education; Two Year College Students; Two Year Colleges

ABSTRACT

The author of this book argues that innovations do not transform colleges because higher education faces a problem of scale. The book identifies two paradigms: "organizational," which is the overall theory-in-use of an organization; and "instructional," which incorporates the mission of higher education institutions to provide instruction in the overall theory-in-use of the institution. An organizational paradigm conditions the way people see the organizations in which they work. A paradigm that is widely, but tacitly, held by many organizations, and which generates the tools and standards of organizational commerce and communication, powerfully shapes people's perceptions. The author argues for viewing higher education through a new lens, and in pursuit of that goal, organizes the book into five parts: (1) "Introducing the Learning Paradigm"; (2) "Understanding Our Learners"; (3) "A Framework for Producing Learning"; (4) "The Learning Paradigm: Six Essential Features"; and (5) "Becoming a Learning Paradigm College." The learning paradigm (after Barr, 1995) de-emphasizes the formal processes of the instructional paradigm, and identifies student learning as its end goal. The book contrasts deep and surface learning, and learning to remember versus learning to know. He argues that a learning paradigm college should assure a long time horizon for learning and provide for stable communities of practice. (Contains 153 references.) (NB)

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